

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-14 JUSE-00

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-10 TRSE-00 NSC-10 SCI-06

OMB-01 DRC-01 L-03 /073 W

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P R 211000Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7711

UNCLAS RANGOON 0490

USIAC

FOR: IBS NEWS DESK

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS DRUGS LAW

RANGOON, FEB 21 -- THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT, YESTERDAY (FEB 20) PROMULGATED A NEW NARCOTICS DRUGS LAW, WHICH COVERS ALL ASPECTS OF ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING AND MAKES CULTIVATION, PRODUCTION, AND POSSESSION OF ILLEGAL DRUGS PUNISHABLE BY HEAVY FINES AND 5 - 10 YEARS OF IMPRISONMENT. THE DEATH PENALTY CAN BE IMPOSED FOR PROCESSING OR SALE OF NARCOTICS. THE LAW ALSO REQUIRES COMPULSORY REGISTRATION AND TREATMENT OF ALL DRUG ADDICTS. THE NARCOTICS DRUGS LAW COVERS THE WHOLE OF BURMA EXCEPT FOR SOME 413 VILLAGE-TRACTS IN THE SHAN STATE IN WHICH 18,744 ACRES ARE UNDER POPPY CULTIVATION BUT INCLUDES PLANS TO HELP PROVIDE SUBSTITUTE CASH CROPS IN PLACE OF THE POPPY. THE PLANS ENVISAGE THAT POPPY CULTIVATION WILL BE TOTALLY ERADICATED IN BURMA IN THREE TO FIVE YEARS, AND MARCH 1, 1979 IS THE DATE SET FOR TOTAL ENFORCEMENT OF THE NEW LAW.

2. THE PREAMBLE OF THE NEW LAW STATES THAT 'NARCOTICS DRUGS...

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ARE NOW PROLIFERATING ALL OVER THE WORLD. UNLESS THIS

PHENOMENON IS CHECKED IN TIME, THE VERY HUMAN RACE FACES THE
THREAT OF DESTRUCTION. AS THE WORLD COMMUNITY IS COMBATING
THIS THREAT, THE UNION OF BURMA FEELS THE NEED TO JOIN IN
THE CAUSE. THIS GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT PUNISHMENT ALONE IS
INADEQUATE TO PREVENT THIS DANGER, THAT
ALL-ROUND MEASURES LIKE EDUCATING THE PEOPLE ON THE DANGERS
OF NARCOTICS DRUGS, PLANNING AND PERSUADING POPPY GROWERS TO
SUBSTITUTE IT WITH OTHER USEFUL CROPS AND RESCRIBING COMPULSORY
TREATMENT FOR DRUG ADDICTS ARE NEEDED FOR EFFECTIVE PREVENTION
OF THE POTENTIAL DANGER OF NARCOTICS.'
HANSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAW, NARCOTICS, DRUG TRAFFIC, DRUG CONTROL, ARRESTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974RANGOO00490
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: RANGOON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740218/aaaaaqtb.tel
Line Count: 72
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: WorrelSW
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 MAR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 MAR 2002 by elbezefj>; APPROVED <02 DEC 2002 by WorrelSW>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TITUTE IT WITH OTHER USEFUL CROPS AND RESCRIBING COMPULSORY TREATMENT FOR DRUG ADDICTS ARE NEEDED FOR EFFECTIVE PREVENTION
TAGS: SNAR, BM
To: USIA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005